

## PEACH QUEEN

COLUMBIA, S. C., Feb. 19.

—Miss Betty Lane Cherry, the former Miss U.S.A., was crowned National Peach Queen Tuesday night at the annual meeting of the National Peach Council.

Miss Cherry, a native of Orangeburg, is a student at Columbia College.

Robert Rice of Palisade, Mo., was elected president of the council earlier Tuesday.

Rice succeeds Mark Boatright of Johnston, S. C. Harold Hartley of Carbondale, Mo., was re-elected secretary-treasurer.

Some 500 growers and industry representatives from 20 states and Canada are attending the annual meeting of the Peach Council which concludes today.

to the Ball-Porter Funeral Home where friends may call after 7 o'clock Tuesday evening and where services will be held at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon. Burial will be in New Harmony cemetery.

## ABRAHAM V. APPLIGATE

Abraham V. Appligate, 90 years old, 100 South Fifth street, died at 10:30 p.m. Tuesday night at the residence. Surviving are a daughter, Mrs. Verla Kiburis of Terre Haute; a son, V. Appligate of Great Falls, Minn.; three grandchildren. The body was taken to the Bedino Chapel of the Valley where friends may call after 7 o'clock Thursday afternoon and where services will be held at 1:30 p.m. Friday afternoon. Burial will be in St. Joseph cemetery.

## MARY EVA OAKLEY

Mary Eva Oakley, 89 years old, 100 North Third street, died at 9 p.m. Tuesday night at the residence, R. R. 6, Terre Haute. The body was taken to the Bedino Chapel of the Valley where friends may call after 7 o'clock Thursday morning. Rev. J. M. Maris will officiate with burial in Woodlawn cemetery.

## ERB ALLEN

Ernest B. Allen, 67 years old, of Davis street, Fairview, Ind., died Tuesday morning at 9:35 o'clock at Union Hospital. He is survived by two brothers, Kenneth and Virgil.

be at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon at the funeral home. Maurice Clymore will officiate and burial will be in Dugger cemetery.

## GEORGE WALLS

PARIS, Ill., Feb. 19.—(Special)—Funeral services for George Walls, 91, Terre Haute, a former resident of Edgar county, will be at the Church of Christ in Paris at 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon. Burial will be in Little Grove cemetery. The body is at the Blume Funeral Home in Paris, where friends may call. He is survived by two sons, Roscoe and Milton of Paris; three daughters, Mrs. Dollie Forsythe of Terre Haute, at whose home he died; Mrs. Violet Oliver of Washington, D. C., and Mrs. Roselle Nicholson of Paris.

## JOSEPH WOODSON WHITESSELL

CLINTON, Ind., Feb. 19.—(Special)—Joseph Woodson Whitesell, 82 years old, died at 5:30 o'clock Tuesday morning in a hospital in New Orleans. He was known as "Wood" Whitesell in the field of photography, in which he was highly recognized for his style throughout the U. S. He was born in Fayette township in Vigo county, but had gone to New Orleans as a young man. Surviving are one sister, Mrs. Anna Dyer of New Goshen, and one brother, Raymond Whitesell, of near Libertyville. Arrangements are being made to have his body returned to the Frist Funeral Home in Clinton.

## WAYNE FIELDS

LEWIS, Ind., Feb. 19.—(Special)—Wayne Fields, 51 years old, died Tuesday afternoon at the St. Anthony Hospital in Terre Haute. Surviving are the wife, Irene; four brothers, Marshall, Gary, and Otto Fields, all of Terre Haute and Ernest of Paris, Ill., and two sisters, Mrs. Stella Lee and Mrs. Zada Collins, both of Terre Haute. The body was taken to the Fidler and Wood Funeral Home at Farmersburg and will be returned to the residence Wednesday where friends may call after 6 o'clock. Funeral services will be at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon at the Lewis Evangelical United Brethren Church. Burial will be in the Mt. Pleasant cemetery.

## MRS. MINNIE D. FARRIS

ST. BERNICE, Ind., Feb. 19.—(Special)—Mrs. Thelma Eslinger has received word of the death of her mother, Mrs. Minnie D. Farris, 77 years old, a former resident of this community, at her home at Santa Anna, Calif. Besides Mrs. Eslinger she is survived by a son, four daughters, a brother, two sisters, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held Wednesday at Santa Anna.

## ORVAL E. SAUCERMAN

DUGGER, Ind., Feb. 19.—(Special)—Funeral services for Orval E. Saucerman, 68 years old, who died Monday, will be at 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon at the Newkirk Funeral Home. Burial will be in the Odd Fellows cemetery at Carlisle.

## CHARLES G. GOON

# Safety Theme Of Mine Rally Here On Friday

Continued From Page One.

Gandy, Jr., director of safety for the National Coal Association, both of whom have been here on numerous occasions within the past few years in the furtherance of safety in Hoosier mines.

District union officials who will participate in the conference are Louis Austin, international board member; Ernest Goad, president, and Ralph Day, secretary-treasurer.

Among the operators who will participate in the conference are Henry P. Smith, president of Princeton Mining Company; W. S. Webster, executive vice president and general manager of Walter Bledsoe & Co., who also heads the American Coal Sales Association; Hugh B. Lee, Sr., president of the Maumee Collieries Company; Charles N. Templeton, president of Templeton Coal Company; Birch Brooks, vice president, Viking Coal Corporation; Amzi Gossard, vice president, Snow Hill Coal Corporation, all of Terre Haute; George Enos of Cleveland, Ohio, president of the Enos Coal Mining Company and Enoco Collieries Corporation; and David Ingle, Jr., of Evansville, president of the Ingle Coal Corporation.

It will be the first visit of Mr.

Terre Haute Tribune  
Wednesday February 19, 1958  
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# Traces

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Louisiana State Museum

**"Evening In Old New Orleans" by Joseph Woodson "Pops" Whitesell. Anne E. Peterson's profile of this native Hoosier, who deserted an Indiana farm to become an internationally recognized photographer, as well as a true French Quarter character, appears on page 4.**

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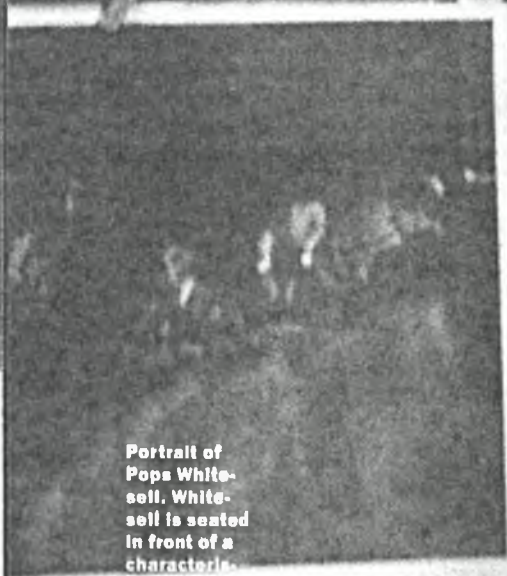
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P O P S W H



Portrait of  
Pops White-  
sell. White-  
sell is seated  
in front of a  
characteris-

tic photo-  
graph by  
photographer  
Harry Herlin,  
Freeport, Illi-  
nois, circa  
1948. The  
portrait was  
probably  
made while  
Pops was on  
the lecture  
circuit.

A H O O S I E R I N T H



T E S E L L



A hunched,  
gnomelike little  
fellow with a  
kewpie-doll  
curl atop his  
shoulder-length  
hair, Joseph  
Woodson  
Whitesell was  
a creative giant.  
A native Hoosier,  
this photographic  
wizard later lived  
in New Orleans,  
Louisiana, and  
became an  
internationally  
known salon  
photographer.

Louisiana State Museum

V I E U X C A R R É

ANNE E. PETERSON



**W**hitesell was born on a farm near the small town of Libertyville, Indiana, in 1876. As a child, he thought of being a painter. However, at age seventeen, because he lacked funds for art training, Whitesell became interested in photography. He got all the magazines he could find and read as much as possible about the subject. He also trekked five miles several times a week to talk photography with the only knowledgeable person in the area. Eventually he bought a camera from his mentor and soon left the plow for the darkroom.

Taking pictures of farmers, Whitesell came to realize that people want to be flattered by their likenesses. He would have to learn to retouch negatives. A photographer named Bundy in Terre Haute agreed that for twenty-five dollars he would teach him the art. After seeing the first sample, Bundy was so impressed with Whitesell's skill that he would not take the money. Instead, to watch his progress, Bundy sent negatives to Whitesell on the farm for retouching.

After perfecting his style making portraits of neighbors, Whitesell put an ad in the *St. Louis and Canadian Photographer* for a job. He had several offers, but chose one in Clinton, Indiana. Not one to be tied down, Whitesell held about fifteen positions in as many years in such cities as Alton and Kansas, Illinois, and Charlestown, Mattoon, and Bloomington, Indiana. Then came an offer in 1918 from Hitchler's studio in New Orleans. An accomplished photographer in his forties, Whitesell took the job. Within a few years, however, he had branched out on his own and put down roots in the Crescent City.

Eventually, after trying several locations, Whitesell set up shop in an old slave quarter off a romantic Vieux Carré courtyard. His studio and home at 726 St. Peter Street were behind what is now the renowned jazz spot, Preservation Hall. Whitesell, who was known as "Pops" to his many friends, became one of the real French Quarter characters. His silvery hair was free-flowing, and he wore his wire-rimmed glasses perched on the end of his nose. Depending on the temperature, his slim shoulders supported as many as five or six shirts,



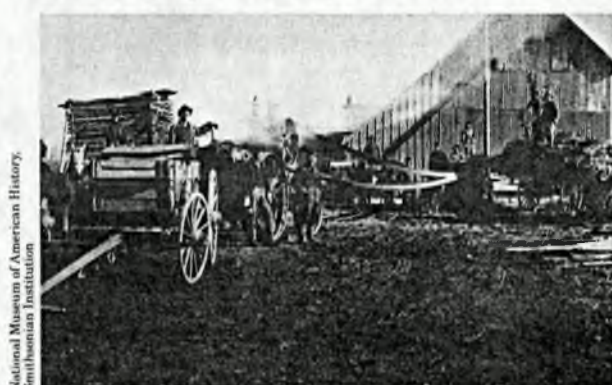
Louisiana State Museum

"Section of Whitesell Farm near Terre Haute, Indiana." Taken on the family farm, this image appears in a wide variety of formats and processes including small bromoil prints.

sweaters, or jackets at a time.

Besides his rumpled, more than casual appearance, Pops's life-style was also unusual. He never married, because, he said, he was married to his work. When he was not actively engaged in photography, he enjoyed reading mysteries and going to cowboy movies. He had a coterie of friends and young photographers who wanted to take advantage of his willingness to share his years of knowledge. Most days, at about eight o'clock, he and a friend would go to the movie theater to buy popcorn, find their seats, and Pops would immediately fall asleep. Pops's eating habits were somewhat eccentric. He took one meal a day at the Bourbon House Restaurant, where he habitually ate a roast beef sandwich with a single thin slice of meat and drank a 7-Up with salt. Otherwise, having read up a bit on yoga, Pops felt his nutritional needs were met by munching on a few nuts. He was practically addicted to aspirins, but never smoked cigarettes or drank alcohol.

**P**ops was a tinkerer. He made his own photographic equipment as well as many devices for domestic use. His toilet and homemade shower were located in a shed adjoining the studio. By wielding a series of wires, he could control the space heater and a rotating mirror so he could view his gate without moving. Whitesell talked about his handiness: "I like to feel that I am independent. . . . So many complexities confuse the lives of most people today; plumbers, electricians, radio



"Threshing Corn 50 Years Ago. Near Centralia, Indiana." Taken around turn of century, picture illustrates global farming equipment the pe

washing machines, and refrigerators. And, I have in my way had to be independent, for I have always been too busy trying to improve my pictures to have time to earn much money. My bank account is always on my hip," added, patting a very flat and somewhat tattered wallet."

The unorthodox photographic equipment Pops constructed amazed fellow photographers. His enlarger was a long contraption consisting of fans, levers, and floodlights, and his darkroom was so light you could read the fine print of stock market quotations. Still, he managed to produce photographs of masterful quality.

Whitesell's bread and butter work was portraits of such local folk as Mardi Gras queens, brides, and Garden District and uptown families. In addition,





Peppers and Pep

"Pep and Peppers." Whitesell later related how he had shot this photograph. "I went around the house at home one day looking for something homelike to get with my camera and around on the back side of the house there they sat. My mother and my sister-in-law. Just like you see them I said all still and look pretty and don't move. I want to make your picture. And here it is. My most loved picture."



**"So What!"**  
One of White-  
sell's most  
famous salon  
photographs.  
Through the  
pose, expres-  
sion, and  
lighting, the  
attitude of  
the model  
and atmo-  
sphere of the  
city are con-  
veyed to the  
viewer.



National Museum, American History



worked for an impressive array of celebrities who visited the Whitesell studio. Among the famous were writers Sinclair Lewis, Erle Stanley Gardner, Max Eastman, and Sherwood Anderson. Also, artists Grant Wood, Pop Hart, and Hoosier Wayman Adams were friends and photographic subjects. His best portraits are truly character studies. His softly lit romantic interpretations of personality convey the individuality of his sitters.

While he was best known commercially for his portrait work, the elfin photographer also made evocative images of local street scenes, dreamy landscapes of Southern oaks, and narrative tableaux. His tableaux took the form of humorous gag shots and domestic sketches reminiscent of Norman Rockwell's scenes of Americana.

Whitesell had a vivacious, outgoing personality that attracted friends from all walks of life. He also spent about half his time talking to perfect strangers—tourists—who came to his studio to meet the artist and see his work. People flocked to the patio filled with ferns and lush flowering plants that the photographer cultivated himself. His studio was filled with piles of photographs, magazines, boxes, and contraptions of his own design. Pops turned no one away. In fact, he loved it. "I have never had worldly wealth, but all the money in the world could not buy *one* of the thousands of friends who come to see my pictures and the patio during each year," stated Whitesell.

At age sixty-eight, when most people have retired from professional life, Whitesell decided he wanted to become one of the top ranked salon photographers, and

he gave himself ten years to do so. Photographic salons were patterned after European painting salons and were held by camera clubs throughout the world. Photographers were ranked according to the number of prints exhibited each year in the eighty-three official salon exhibits. He specialized in group photographs, and soon the signature "Wood Whitesell, N.O." was internationally recognized. Five years after he began, Whitesell was ranked number nine in the world. He became a member of the Photographic Society of America (PSA), the Royal Photographic Society in London, and the Delta Camera Club in New Orleans. The Professional Photographers of America (PPA) also granted him the titles of star and master photographer. Because of his recognition and visibility, in 1946 the Smithsonian Institution invited Whitesell to submit photographs for a one-man show. He sent fifty-eight images from which he suggested they make a selection. Instead, they hung all the prints and kept some for their permanent collection.

Pops became the darling of the photographic salon circuit. In the spring of 1949 he was sponsored by the PSA's National Lecture Tour Program. In twenty-three days, he covered twelve thousand miles and made twenty-three appearances, always carrying forty to sixty pounds of photographic equipment along. His lecture topic was pictorial group photography. Whitesell defined a pictorial image as "a photograph that has an interest, that would appeal to anybody, regardless of whether they knew anyone in the picture." He explained that his work was strongly influenced by Rembrandt and other Dutch artists.



Horse and Wagon, Indiana, circa 1900.



In 1904 in St. Louis, at the World's Fair, the Holland Government had sent the best replica they could have made of Rembrandt's *Night Watch*. . . . I was thrilled with that picture. I went home and tried for several days to find out who Mr. Rembrandt was. I found out he was quite a good Dutch painter. Studying Rembrandt led to Van Dyke, and other old Dutch painters as well as early English painters. Studying the painters also brought to the front their pictures; and as most of them had made a considerable number of group pictures, I got going on groups.

It takes an accomplished hand to produce quality group photographs. Pops was skillful at arranging subjects and obtaining naturalistic expressions. Besides grouping, Whitesell's work shows another Dutch influence—luminescent "Rembrandt" lighting. His street scenes, landscapes, and most successful formal portraits have a soft richness and warm tonal quality reminiscent of fine Dutch painting.





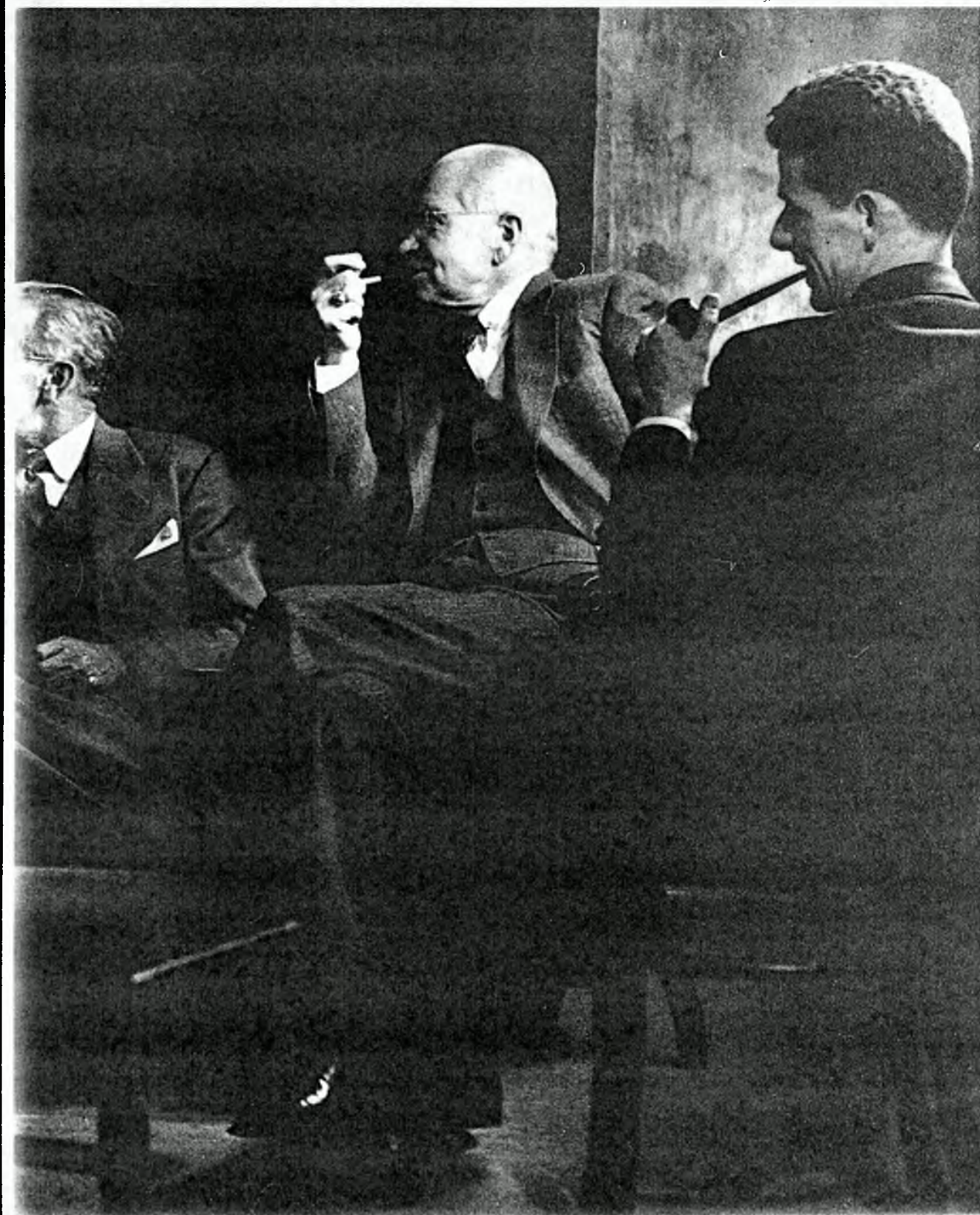
**N**ot surprisingly, Pops excelled at manipulating his photographic prints to the degree that the original negative had little resemblance to the end product. Typically, he "burned" in overexposed areas to make them darker and "dodged" shadows to lighten those areas. However, figures might be cut out, moved around, glued back on another print and rephotographed. He also made photographs from the same negative in very

different sizes, using a variety of photographic processes and papers. And the retouching he learned back in Indiana was heavily employed.

Part of the inspiration for his creativity in the dark-room may have come from his lack of technical skill in making negatives. He had a terrible fear of underexposing negatives, so he claimed he made exposures two or three times longer than necessary, then overdevel-

National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

**"Margaret Has the Floor."** When his friend Indiana painter Wayman Adams (second from left) and his wife Margaret were visiting New Orleans, Pops decided to have a party for them at his home and invited three Eastman Kodak employees who happened to be in town as well. He told the men to look intensely interested in what Margaret was saying to make the composition successful. The photographer himself is seated in the lower left-hand corner. Note the heavy shutter release for making the exposure while he sat in on the picture. White-sell made four negatives in less than fifteen minutes and was very pleased with the results until someone mentioned that there was no ashtray and people were smoking. Since White-sell strongly believed in realism, nothing would do but that he draw an ashtray in on the footstool on the negative.











Portrait of  
Elio Stanley  
Gardner.  
Whitcomb  
later told how  
he first en-  
countered  
the Perry Mas-  
son mystery  
writer. "When  
I met Elio  
Stanley Gard-  
ner in the  
Bourbon  
House, he  
said 'You look  
like a man  
with a trag-  
edy.' I said, 'I  
had no trag-  
edy in my  
life. That is  
its tragedy.'"  
Gardner later  
used Pope as  
model for  
"Grampa Wig-  
gins" in *The  
Case of the  
Smoking  
Chimney* and  
*The Case of  
the Turning  
Tide*.

Louisiana State Museum



oped them as well. Finally, he would carefully try to compensate for the overexposure in the printing. He cheerfully admitted his shortcomings: "Most of my negatives are pretty bad. I think I am about the worst negative maker there is. On general arrangement and composition, and getting the foundation under it—I am not so bad on that . . . but I have to do an awful lot of work in the dark room. In fact, my salon prints mostly are made in the dark room."

As Pops got older, he became more eccentric. Paid commissions could sit unattended for months while he pursued his salon work. More than once, Pops would shoot a photographic sitting, accept payment for it, and then nothing more would be done. When eventually confronted with his tardiness, he would say he was just going to make the prints when he was interrupted by the customer! Bills went unpaid. The electric power



"Circus Comes to Town. Bloomington, Ind. about 1914." Whitesell captures the excitement and charm of the arrival of a circus in a small mid-western town.

Louisiana State Museum

was often cut off. But Pops the tinkerer would jury-rig the wires and tap the current until he was discovered by the public service company. Frequently his upstairs neighbor, friend and fellow photographer Dan Leyrer, would bail him out of his financial difficulties.

Pops's lack of interest in the worldly necessities of life brought on his eventual demise. It was self-neglect and home-doctoring that marked the beginning of the end. A leg injury worsened to the point that the limb had to be amputated. His handicap made it difficult for him to get around or work. Although he received a small government pension, times were difficult for Pops. His many friends helped support him and even arranged a sale of his work to raise money. Shortly before his death, Pops told an interviewer, "My life has been very quiet. My biggest love has been my camera. I want to keep on taking pictures until I die." On 18 February 1958, at the age of eighty-two, Whitesell died. His remains were



National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

"Skeptic Patient. Never Did Trust No Damn Doctor No How." In discussing the image, Whitesell added, "With print we added the little line 'Never did trust no damn doctor no how.' This is our best selling print and I believe the line adds much interest to the picture. I try to practice realism to as high a degree as possible. This title as per example as well as the added line fits the old tough nut and draws attention to it."

sent back to his native state for burial in Clinton, Indiana. Pops Whitesell, character extraordinaire, left behind a large body of work, much of which is now housed at the Louisiana State Museum and other institutions. His photographs remain a significant artistic legacy in the history of Indiana and Louisiana photography.

Anne E. Peterson received a B.A. degree in art history from the University of Texas and an M.A. degree from George Washington University. Formerly the curator of photography at the Louisiana State Museum in New Orleans, she now resides in Washington, D.C., and does free-lance work in the field of the history of photography. She is currently working on a contract at the Archives Center of the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, with the Underwood and Underwood Glass Stereograph Collection. Ms. Peterson continues her research on Pops Whitesell. Those having further information regarding Whitesell's life and work can reach the author by writing to Traces.

### Suggestions for Further Reading

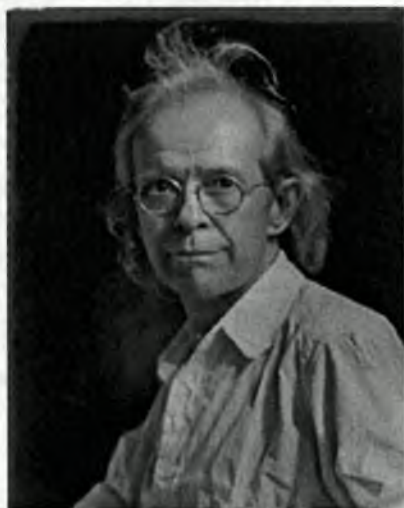
- Newhall, Beaumont. *The History of Photography: From 1839 to the Present Day*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982.
- Peterson, Anne E. "Louisiana Photography: An Historical Overview." In *A Century of Vision: Louisiana Photography 1884-1984*, edited by Herman Mhire. Lafayette: University of Southwestern Louisiana Art Museum, 1986.
- Samuel, Ray. "French Quarter Hoosier." *Indianapolis Star Magazine*, 3 April 1949, pp. 6-9.



# BERGERON STUDIO AND GALLERY

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## THE POPS WHITESELL COLLECTION [PAGES 1 2](#)



A native Hoosier, Joseph Woodson "Pops" Whitesell was part of a New Orleans bohemian writers and artists living and working in the French Quarter in the 1940s. Born in Libertyville, Indiana, Feb. 11, 1876 he began teaching himself photography at age 17. He came to New Orleans 1918; settled in 1921 at an and studio at 726 St. Peter St. behind what is now the well-known jazz club P Hall and by the 1940's ranked among the top ten salon exhibitors in the world famous portrait subjects; Wayman Adams, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, Erle Stanley Gardner. His fame led to a one man exhibition at Smithsonian Institution of 58 of his photographs in 1946. He never married and died Feb 1

Sources: Dalt Wonk, "Pops Whitesell", DIXIE, Nov. 29, 1981. NEW ORLEANS: 29, 1957. TIMES-PICAYUNE, obituary, Feb. 20, 1958; Feb. 12, 1978 and Louisiana Museum

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**New Orleans**  
MAGAZINE

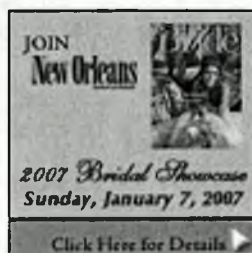
*No one knows New Orleans better...*

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December 2006



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YEARS



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DOMAINE CHANDON

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## CHRONICLES OF RECENT HISTORY: PICTURE PERFECT

25-09-06 00:00

To

BY: CAROLYN KOLB, PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY LOUISIANA STATE MUSEUM

They should bottle spit – it's the best glass cleaner!" according to famed New Orleans photographer C. Bennett Moore, as recalled by his granddaughter, Eugenie Stoll Ragan, who was only seven years old when her grandfather died in 1939. "I remember him vividly, putting those pictures together," she says. Obviously, the glass in Moore's frames had to be spotless.



Besides portraits and events, Moore had a thriving business selling colored photographs of French Quarter scenes, and even today his views are still sold at the gallery of Joseph Bergeron, who began his own photographic career working in Moore's studio.

Capturing a memory on film is a custom that generations of

Orleanians have treasured. In New Orleans, most of those important photographs were taken by commercial photographers whose ranks have included a wide range of personalities.

C. Bennett Moore was born in 1879 in Sauk Centre, Minn., served in the Spanish American War and then went to work for a New Orleans photographer, Emile Rivoire. In 1904, Moore purchased Rivoire's studio, and renamed it for himself. Until his death in 1935, he held a reputation as one of the great portrait photographers of the South, but he was not the only picture taker in town.

New Orleans was home to photographers from the time the art was invented in the 19th century. By the 20th century, E.J. Bellocq was one of many working photographers in the city and gained



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posthumous fame for his portraits of the working girls of Storyville (and a somewhat skewed characterization in the movie *Pretty Baby*.)

Joseph Woodson "Pops" Whitesell, an Indiana native who arrived in New Orleans in 1918, was one of a quirky group of bohemian artists and writers in the French Quarter.

Whitesell lived and worked on St. Peter Street, in the building that now houses Preservation Hall. He was famed for his portraits.

Bergeron, whose gallery today offers some Whitesell prints, recalls that Whitesell often included himself in photos. "There's one that is supposed to be in an operating room, with Pops as the patient on the table." Whitesell photographed the literary personalities of the city, and he was honored with a one-man exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution in 1946. He died in 1958.

Photographers are convivial people, and the local group formed the New Orleans Camera Club in the 1930s. Among its members were Bennett Moore's daughter Phyllis, especially known for her portraits of children and women; Clarence John Laughlin, famed for his romantic and surrealistic landscapes and architectural photos; and commercial photographer C.F. Weber, who did advertising work for such local corporations as D. H. Holmes, Adler's and New Orleans Public Service.

The Professional Photographers of America organization dates back to 1880, and beginning in 1937, the group began offering a degree program for a Master of Photography. There were regular juried shows at national and state meetings, courses offered in the summer and candidates for the degree were required to enter shows and to lecture and complete courses.

Phyllis Moore, Bennett Moore's daughter, who regularly taught PPA courses at Winona Lake, Ind., recalled her daughter, Eugenie Stoll Ragan's, experience getting her Master's designation. "You had to have a lot of knowledge before you went – and you had to know how to process film, and what a Speed Graphic was," Mrs. Ragan remembers, explaining that Speed Graphics were large boxy cameras that produced 4 inch by 5 inch negatives and were preferred by news photographers.

Mrs. Ragan started her own career early: "I got my first set of paint – oil paints, not water colors – when I was seven," she says. Photographers painted in oils on the black and white prints, and she learned quickly. Brides were a specialty of the Moore women, Eugenie and her mother Phyllis. "We'd go to the shops to do bridal portraits at the last fittings. It saved transporting the dress."

Phyllis Moore was the first woman to be president of the Professional Photographers of Louisiana, and her daughter would follow in the role.

Another photographer trained at C. Bennett Moore's studio was Joseph Bergeron. "I started working there as a helper and an assistant while I was still in high school," he explains. When Bergeron joined the Navy, he was chosen for photography school and gained three more years experience. By the time he left the

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service in 1970, the Moore Studio was closed. He went to work for C. F. Weber, and in 1977, bought the business from him. "I still operate it as C.F. Weber Photography, and we still have good relations with his clients today," Bergeron says proudly.

Lookin  
magaz  
find th  
Orlean  
lookin  
you'll f

He opened Bergeron Studio and Gallery, where he shows and sells prints from photographers including Jack Beech, Fonville Wynans and Michael Smith, as well as the Moore family. Another past president of the Professional Photographers of Louisiana, Bergeron earned his own Master of Photography degree in 1985.

The Moores were not the only camera-happy family in town. Leon Trice, Jr., was born in Texas, but came here as a child when his father Leon Trice, Sr., opened a New Orleans photography studio. The younger Leon went to Tulane University and, after serving in the Navy in World War II, came home to join his father. The Trice business was flourishing in the 1940s. "During the war, everybody was getting married, so everybody wanted wedding pictures," his widow, Lydia Eaves Trice, remembers. Leon, Jr., participated in programs and courses at the PPA, and "he really enjoyed more commercial work, that's what he really liked."

His work often took him up in the air. "He flew with (Mayor) DeLesseps Morrison to photograph the damage from the 1947 hurricane," she says, "and he went to South America with Congressman F. Edward Hebert." Trice would do extensive work for Tulane University, and today his family has placed his large collection at the university.

While the Trice studio closed, Mike Posey Photography kept on, even when the founder retired. Rudy Bierhuizen, from the Netherlands, came here with university-level photography training. After working with Posey for 17 years, Bierhuizen bought the business when Posey left in 1998.

Although their work includes a "fair amount of weddings" and "lots of debutantes," the specialty of the studio is executive portraits. "We photograph a lot of attorneys," Bierhuizen notes. "You'd be surprised how many women are working, how many female attorneys there are – it's a big change from 20 years ago."

With Mike Posey Photography's Canal Street location in Mid-City, flooding presented a problem. "We did save a lot, but there were an awful lot of negatives that were lost," Bierhuizen says. More recent work might be done digitally (and thus more easily saved,) but Bierhuizen admits to using film, especially for large portraits. "Film has a different quality, it's a little softer," he says.

For photographers, the aftermath of Katrina has not meant an end to work. Even the storm's worst devastation produced some business; for instance, Bierhuizen has been photographing levee damage.

People are coming in to get copies of photos they lost, and, rest assured, the photographers of New Orleans are ready to replace those memories, one frame at a time.



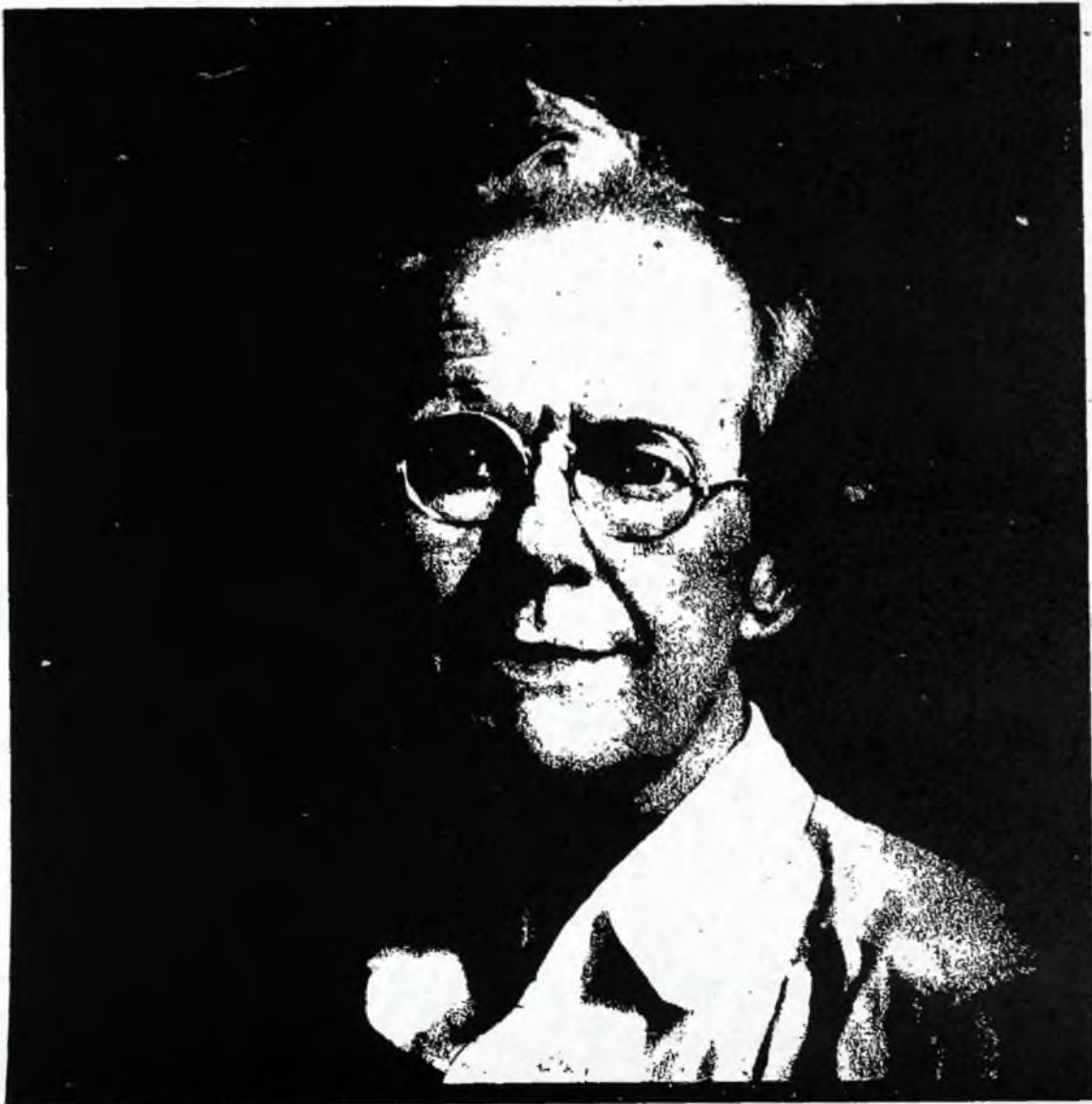
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Joseph Woodson Whitesell, now a spry 73, is a former Hoosier farmer. This is a self portrait.

## FRENCH QUARTER HOOSIER

By RAY SAMUEL

**Pixieish little Wood Whitesell deserted an Indiana farm to become one of the world's top portrait photographers**

**A** SPRY LITTLE Hoosier farmer named Joseph Woodson Whitesell some years ago forsook the plow for the camera and traveled all the way down to New Orleans' famed French Quarter to begin making an international name for himself as a photographer.

So thoroughly did he make the transition from barnyard to dark room that today, at 73, Wood Whitesell ranks seventh in the photographic world for the number of his prints hung in exhibits. High rank among all the great photographers of the world was first awarded him by the American Annual of Photography five years ago and the mantle of photographic great-

ness has rested on his bent but extremely agile little figure ever since.

Moreover, in a section of a city particularly renowned for colorful and frequently talented characters, the farmer from western Indiana has become one of the most visited, most sought out personages of them all.

The Whitesell studio at 726 St. Peter Street in the most distinctly "quarterish" part of the world-famed French Quarter constantly is sought out by persons from everywhere, visitors other than those wanting a portrait made by the old master himself. His quaint patio is on the "must see" list of tourists, scores of

whom each day troop through the Quarter's narrow streets. Wayman Adams, a celebrated painter and himself a Hoosier, is at home there, as are such widely known figures as Sinclair Lewis, Erle Stanley Gardner, Max Eastman, Max Pollak, Alexander Brooks and "Pop" Hart. The late Sherwood Anderson also was a frequent visitor.

Those among Gardner mystery fans who recall his famous character "Gramps Wiggins" already are acquainted with Wood Whitesell, for "Gramps", taken right from life, is none other than "Pop" Whitesell.

THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR MAGAZINE

THE PIXIEISH photo when he can be made to that he was born 12 miles from him down further and birthplace is Libertyville.

"A blacksmith and a there was to Libertyville while pushing one hand his always springs back to another Whitesell trademark.

"I guess Libertyville would call a place, that's all," t added a postoffice before I

Before he left, Whitesell in photography. Wood, camera shutters snap, remember with any knowledge of other farm five miles distant those miles several times. Finally he bought a camera did it. The farm lost all it

Young Wood went to as much as he could by himself, processing them in a quickly learned something come only in late years themselves as they are. negatives to be a portrait deftly handled groups of people known to salons everywhere

AT TERRE HAUTE W Bundy who, for \$25, agreed APRIL 1, 1949

Most famous o



Indianapolis Star Magazine  
Sunday April 3, 1949  
p6 (1 of 4 pages)





This is a self portrait.



Most famous of all Whitesell salon prints includes in subject group the Indiana artist, Wayman Adams, and his wife.

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thum each day troop through the Quarter's narrow streets. Wayman Adams, a celebrated painter and himself a Hoosier, is at home there, as are such widely known figures as Sinclair Lewis, Erle Stanley Gardner, Max Eastman, Max Pollak, Alexander Brooks and "Pop" Hart. The late Sherwood Anderson also was a frequent visitor.

Those among Gardner mystery fans who recall his famous character "Grampa Wiggins" already are acquainted with Wood Whitesell, for "Grampa", taken right from life, is none other than "Pops" Whitesell.

THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR MAGAZINE

THE PIXIEISH photographer of St. Peter Street, when he can be made to sit down and recollect, says that he was born 12 miles northwest of Terre Haute. Pin him down further and he'll admit the name of his birthplace is Libertyville.

"A blacksmith and a grocery store were all that there was to Libertyville then," he recalls wistfully while pushing one hand through silky gray hair. The hair always springs back into the familiar kewpie curl, another Whitesell trademark.

"I guess Libertyville was just about big enough to sell a place, that's all," the ex-Hoosier says. "They added a postoffice before I left."

Before he left, Whitesell farmed and got interested in photography. Wood, as he is known wherever camera shutters snap, remembers that the nearest person with any knowledge of the photo arts lived on another farm five miles distant. Whitesell would trudge those miles several times a week to talk photography. Finally he bought a camera from his neighbor. That did it. The farm lost all its appeal.

Young Wood went to Terre Haute after learning as much as he could by himself, taking pictures of farmers, processing them in a crude but satisfactory way. He quickly learned something that he has successfully overcome only in late years—that people don't like to see themselves as they are. He had to learn to retouch negatives to be a portrait photographer. Today, his deftly handled groups of people, caught as they are, are known to salons everywhere.

AT TERRE HAUTE Wood sought out a man named Bundy who, for \$25, agreed to teach him retouching. He

APRIL 3, 1949

asked the young aspirant to try a negative, to see how far he'd progressed. So good was the job, that Bundy couldn't take the youngster's money. He sent Wood home with the understanding that he would forward negatives to the farm home for retouching and thereby watch his progress.

"Then I got good making pictures of neighbors," Whitesell recalls, his round face glowing. "When I thought I was ready, I put ads in a photo journal published in St. Louis called the 'St. Louis and Canadian Photographer.' I had several offers, but I took one at Clinton, Ind. The next few years sound like a railroad timetable—Alton, Ill.; Kansas, Ill.; Charleston, Mattoon, Bloomington, back to Mattoon. I had 15 jobs in 15 years."

"When I got back to Mattoon that last time, I found an offer from a New Orleans studio, Hitchler, to come on 'way down South. Imagine, a Hoosier in snowless Louisiana? Well, I've been in New Orleans ever since. Been in my own business since a few months after I got here."

That's about all Wood Whitesell will tell about his personal history. But just get him started on his pictures and photography. The equipment he uses for his superb negatives, his "Rembrandt" lighting, his flawless prints, is almost entirely Whitesell-made. When it is considered that cameras, enlargers, printers of such vintage have produced prints with an amazing record for prizes and salon hangings—including a one-man show at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington—the true Whitesell genius emerges.

Six years ago Whitesell decided he'd devote more of his much-in-demand time to salon work. Photog-

raphers in this field are rated according to the number of prints hung in the 83-odd salons throughout the world. He determined to become one of the top-ranking exhibitors in 10 years. It took him exactly five years to hit the No. 9 mark in 1947. Last year he became No. 7, in just about half the time he had allotted himself.

"Pops" Whitesell is a perfectionist. That, together with his delightful personality, contributes to his success. He is recognized on two continents as a master of group compositions. He lectures on this, one of photography's most difficult kinds of pictures, before camera clubs everywhere. Nothing gives him more fun than, after his lecture, to arrange the entire club, or a portion thereof, into a composition for a picture. One of these recently won recognition at an important salon.

SOMEWHERE, above the picturesque courtyard, over the clutter of studio and dark room, "Pops" Whitesell sleeps. This century-old house in the historic section of New Orleans is his world. Never long on worldly goods, but rich in the desire and ability to create lovely things, "Pops" hopes some day to be able to devote all his time to his beautiful, effective salon prints.

"Then I'll have what I've always wanted," says the boy from Libertyville, "and that's independence. Independence to do what I like best, free from the complexities of modern civilization."

"I hope to hit that No. 1 spot. Could of done it, too, if I'd been able to neglect my shop to send out more prints. You can see what I mean by independence." ★ ★ ★

(Continued on Pages 8 and 9)



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# FRENCH QUARTER HOOSIER



Another famous Whitesell photo hung in 77 galleries is "Pep and Peppers" for which his mother and sister-in-law posed 40 years ago on porch of home at Libertyville.



Titled "So What?" this portrait in a French Quarter doorway



*Listen... can you hear it?*

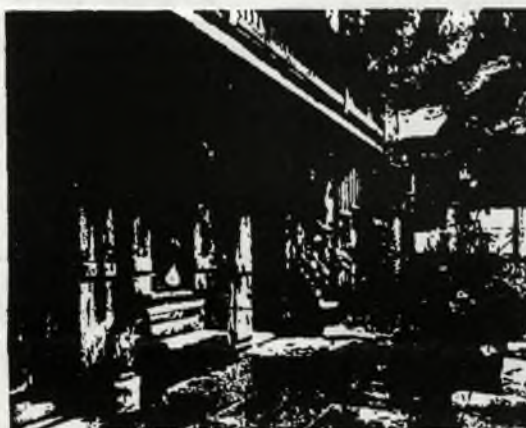
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Picturesque courtyard of Whitesell's French Quarter studio home is visited by scores of curious tourists.



Much of former Hoosier's photographic and dark room equipment is self made. Century-old house is studio.

THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR MAGAZINE



"Hoosier Pioneers" is among Women in group were early



Whitesell is recognized in of group composition. This

APRIL 3, 1949





Peppers" for which  
me at Libertyville.



ell's French Quarter  
of curious tourists.



graphic and dark room  
ry-old house is studio.  
DIANAPOLIS STAR MAGAZINE



Titled "So What?" this portrait of New Orleans woman  
in a French Quarter doorway has hung in 75 galleries.



"Moosier Pioneers" is among outstanding salon prints.  
Women in group were early residents of Libertyville.



Whitesell is recognized internationally as a master  
of group composition. This is "Ladies From St. Anna's."  
APRIL 3, 1949

  
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